

costs twice as much to fix a road if you wait too long. And the critical point isn't seven or eight years, it probably is two or three years in which the repair needs to be made. If you wait longer than that, then the deterioration is so far that reconstruction or something more is needed. Change for the sake of change has no purpose, as I gathered it was suggested. Yes, it is important for jobs. One little project on the interstate that was just mentioned, happened to run across the information the other day, it was about 100 people involved in that project. I think 11 or 12 of them were state people, with engineers in charge, then people have to check to make sure the proper mix and all those things are being done. The rest were jobs for citizens and you can multiply that time and time again across the state. If you cut the highway funds you're cutting construction. Maintenance will continue because obviously maintenance has to continue, but construction and reconstruction, the kind of work that is necessary in order to avoid major highway costs is what is being delayed and it's a serious political mistake as well as a policy mistake for the long term interest of the citizens of the state. I would urge that you not get enthralled with the idea that you're going to solve a temporary problem of state revenue by shifting a cost over to the highway user who already carries a substantial burden of taxation. At best you may be backing yourself up to one year with a bigger problem next year. Again, I would urge you, there is no merit in hurting a good program, pulling down a good program to a level that you think other programs have. Keep the good ones you have and then let's do the things that have to be done for what we can afford for those other programs, but don't bring the one prime thing that Nebraska has and must have is an adequate highway system if any progress is to be accorded to this state at all.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Vickers is next, but may I introduce some guests in the south balcony, please, guests of Senator Warner, 21 students in the fourth grade from Raymond Central at Ceresco, Nebraska, and their teacher. Would you folks please stand and be recognized? Thank you. Senator Vickers, please.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President and members, I rise to support the Johnson amendment. I would like to point out that, as I look at this issue at least, it's more or less of an issue of should those people who use the highways of this